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SAWNEY'S LETTERS,

—OR—

CARIBOO RHYMES.

By James Anderson

FROM 1864 TO 1868.

LETTER NO. I.

[WRITTEN FEBRUARY, 1864.]

DEAR SAWNEY,—I sit doon to write
A screed to you by candle light,
An answer to your friendly letter,
I ne'er had ane that pleased me better.
Your letter cam by the Express,
Eight shillin's carriage—naethin' less.
You'll think this awfu'—'tis, nae doot—
(A dram's twa shillin's here-aboot);
I'm sure if Tamie Ha'—the buddy
Was here wi' his three legged cuddy
He hauls ahent him wi a tether,
He'd beat the Express, faith a'thegithe—
To speak o't in the truest way
'Tis Barnard's Cariboo Delay.

You'd maybe like to ken what pay
Miners get here for ilka day.
Jist twa pound sterling, sure as death—
It should be four—atween us baith.
For gin ye count the cost o' livin'
There's naething left to gang and come on;
And should you bide the winter here
The shoppy-buddies 'll grab your gear.
And little work ane finds to do
A' the lang dreary winter thro'.

Sawney—had ye your tatties here,
And neeps and carrots—dinna speer
What price—tho' I could tell ye weel,
Ye might think me a leein' chiel;
Nae, lad, ye ken I never lee,
Ye a believe that fa's frae me;
Neeps, tatties, carrots—by the pun'
Jist twa and a penny—try for fun
How muckle twad be for a ton.
Ait meal four shillin's, flour is twa,
And milk's no to be had ava.
For at this season o' the year
There's naething for a coo up here
To chaw her cud on,—sae ye see
Ye are far better aff than me,—
For while you're sittin warm at hame,
And suppin' parritch drooned in cranme,
The deil a drap o' milk hae I
But gobble our my parritch dry;
Of course, I can get butter here,
Twal shillin' a pund—it's far oure dear.
Aye—a' thing sells at a lang price.
Tea, coffee, sugar, bacon, rice,
Four shillin's a pound, and something mair.
And e'en the weights are raither bare—
Sae much for prices.

Noo for claims,
And first a word about their names;
Some folk were sae oppressed wi' wit
The ca'd their claim by name "Coo ——,"
And tho' they struck the dirt by name
They ne'er struck pay dirt in their claim.
Sor[illegible]s made a gae fine joke
A[illegible]en'd their bit ground 'Dead Broke,'
Wh[illegible]ome, to fix their fate at once,
Ca'd their location 'The Last Chance:'
There's 'Tinker,' 'Grizzly'—losh, what names,
There's 'Prince o' Wales'—the best o' claims,
There's 'Beauregard' and 'Never Sweat.'
And scores o' ithers I forget.
The 'Richfield' and the 'Montreal,'
They say they struck the pay last fall.
But will the strik' it gin the spring,
Aye, Sawney, that's anither thing;
But by an' bye they'll ken, nae doot,
If they can pump their water oot,
Some strik' the bed-rock pitchin' in,
And some the bed-rock canna win,
But ne'er a color can they see
Until they saut it first a wee;
And syne they tell to ilka man
They struck twa dollars to the pan.
You'll see'd into the Victoria Press
As twenty dollars—naething less.
Aye, Sawney, here a wee bit story,
Gin ance it travels to Victory,
Is magnified a hundred fold.
The bed-rock here, doon there is gold;
Some folks would manufacture lees
To mak' a bawbee on a cheese.
Shame on the man who salts a claim.
A man he is—but just in name—
NO MANHOOD'S IN HIM, HE'S A CHEAT,
A SMOOTH, DISSEMBLING HYPOCRITE,
WHO, IF HE COULD BUT GAIN HIS END,
WOULD E'EN DECEIVE HIS DEAREST FRIEND.

There is a set o' men up here
Wha never work thro' a' the year,
A kind o' serpents, craul'n' snakes,
That fleece the miner o' his st[illegible]s;
They're Gamblers—honest men some say,
Tho' its quite fair to cheat in play
IF IT'S NO KENT O'—I ne'er met
An honest man a Gambler yet!
O, were I Judge in Cariboo
I'd see the laws were carr'd thro',
I'd hae the cairds o' every pack
Tied up into a gunny sack,
Wi' a' the gamblers chained thegither
And banish'd frae the creek forever.
But, Sawney, there's anither clan,
There's nane o' them I'd ca' a man.
They ca' them "jumpers"—it's my belief
That jumper is Chinook for thief;—
The jump folks claims and jump their lots,
They jump the very pans pots;
But wait a wee—for a' this evil—
Their friend 'll jump them.
He's the deevil.

And sae ye think o' comin' here,
And leavin' all your guids and gear,
Your wife and bairns, and hame, eh, Sawney,
If ye wad listen to advic—
And sae ye will if ye be wise
Jist bide at home and work awa',
Ye mauna think we houk up gold,
As ye the tatties frae the mould.
Gude faith, y'ell maybe houk a twa'l mo't
An' never ev'n get a glisk o't!
An' then what comes o' us puir deevils,
We get as thin and lean as weevils;
O' wark we canna get a stroke,
We're what they ca' out here 'dead broke,'
Which means we hinna e'en a groat
To line our stomach or our coat,
Sae doon the country we may gang,
And this the burden o' our sang
To ilka ane that comes alang,
Freend be advised and turn aboot,
For Cariboo is noo 'played out!'

Noo, Sawney, I'll blaw oot the light,
I'll finish this some ither night,
I'll cast my coat and breeks, that's a',
And sleep until the daylight daw.

DEAR SAWNEY,—I noo tak the time
To feenish oot my thread o' rhyme,
But as my bobbin's getting bare
I'll no can spin ye muckle mair,
An' sae ye're guid auld mither's dead,
This aye keeps runnin' in my head.
Eh, weel I mind the awful lickin'
She gae us twa for pusie stickin'!
Noo even whan I think o' that,
What gar'd her flyte sae 'boot a cat?
An' it had worried oor she rabbit,
An' feckled a' the young an's grabbit;
But when ye're mither fand this oot
She ca'd the cat a clarty brute,
An' as she skelped us sae cruel
She fill'd our stomachs fu' o' gruel.
Aye, Sawney, lad, auld folks maun dee,
An' young uns may—so let us be
Twa doonright honest, trustin' men,
Syne we'll be ready noo or then.
An' ye hae got anither bairn,
Another stone to haip the cairn
Aye, aye, for ilka ane that dees.
There's ane and maybe mair that sees.
Sae dander-headed Smiddy Jock
Is rivetted wi' Maggie Lock!
I canna think hoo she could mairy
Sic a blethrin' harum-scairy;
Some folks dislike what ithers like,
An' some see guid in the warst tyke,
Sae Maggie may see this in Johnnie,
But, certies me, he is no bonny!
Ye ken I liked this lass fa' weel,
An' thocht mysel' a happy chiel.
Ah, I should ne'er hae trusted Mag,
She's like her mither Eve—the hag—
Wha fell in love, lang time ago,
Wi' that auld blacksmith doon below;
Believin' a his words were true,
She put the aiple in her mou',
An' whan auld Aidam she had gotten,
They ate it, but they foon' it rotten!
They lost the guid, and got the evil,
A' thro' oor mither's bein' sae ceevil!
Ye ken that like produces like,
That bees are bred in a bee's byke.
Sae evil doon frae Aidam ran
A thro' the veins o' every man,
An' woman, too—SAE MAGGIE LOCKE
FORGAT HER JEAMES AND SPLICED WI' JOCK!

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There are some women on this creek,
Sae modest and sae mild and meek!
The deep red blush aye pents their cheek,
They never swear but when they speak.
Each ane's a Mistress too ye'll find.
To mak guid folks think that she's joined
In honest wedlock unto one:
"She's your's or any other man."
But dinna fear, for me at least,
I'll never mak mysel a beast!
But let this drap—to "err is human,"
An "Frailty thy name is woman."

"Love in itsel is very guid,
But 'tis by nae means solid faid"—
Whan man and woman's tied thegither,
They are made one till death does sever;
So says the pastor—but is 't true?
Has Kate an' you the self same mou?
Whan ye sit doon to eat betimes
Does this same mou fill baith ye're WAMES?
It may be sae, but this I ken,
Gif ye war ane ye noo are ten;
There's Jeames and Sawney, Kate and Meg,
An' Geordie wi' the crookit leg,
There's Wull and Hairry, Shuse and Jock,
Nae langer than his father's sock—
An' noo this ither brat ye've got—
Oh, Sawney! faigs, ye shud be shot!
Oure mony bairns—oure mony cares—
Oure many saut and pepper hairs!
TWA MAY MAK OOT TO LIVE AS ANE
BY PICKIN' GAE CLOSE TO THE BANE,
BUT WHAN THERE'S MAIR YE'LL FIND THIS TRUE,
THAT ILKA ANE HAS GOT A MOU!

I'm glad to hear ye hae sic ots,
An' that ye sell ye're sax fat stots;
That a' gangs right aboot the fairm,
That Tam 's feed for anither term;
An' that ye're pluin's no ahent,
That ye could pay the Laird his rent.

As water 's to a thirsty soul,
Or drinkin' toddy frae a bowl—
Wi' twa-three freen's—sae is guid news
To Lim wha's far frae them he lo'es (loves).

Gie my respecks to your guid wife;
If ever I get hame to Fife,
I'll teach her hoo to mak loaf bread,
Wi' sour dough—oot o' HER ain head!
An' gee my love to a' ye're bairns,
To guid John Thamson o' the Cairns;
To ilka ane that speers for me,
My kind regards be sure to gie.

An' noo, dear Sawney, naething mair
I hae to say, yet canna bear
The thocht o' finishin' my rhyme,
'Tis like we pairted second time;
But I'll no fret—whate'er it seems—
Ye ken that I'm ye're true freend

JEAMES.

LETTER No. II.

[WRITTEN MARCH, 1866.]

DEAR SAWNEY,—What on earth's the matter,
Ye hinna answered my last letter?
A thocht sometimes comes i' my head
That my friend Sawney's maybe dead;
But sic a thocht I canna thole,
It grieves my very heart and soul,
An' sae I'll banish a' misgivin'
An' tak for granted that ye're livin'—
I mind me noo o' the old saw,
"That ill news faster rins than a'."
Sae gif ye're sands o' life had run
I wad a heard o't "sure's a gun."
Ye canna surely hae forgot
Ye're auld freend Jeames, ye're brither Scot?
Ye mind in Rable Burns' lays
What honest Tam o' Shanter says
About his ancient, drouthy crony,
The decent body, souter Johnny;
"Tam lo'ed him like a vera brither.
They had been fou for weeks thegither."
I weel believe their love wad end,
Nae surety's in a whisky freend;
A drunken chiel nae man can trust,
His word's as brittle as pie crust.
Gie me that freend that ne'er was fou,
And, Sawney, him I fand in you;
A doonright honest, sober man
As ever stood upon the lan'.
Our love was ne'er beget by drink,
But o' a purer stream, I think.
We baith were puir in warldly gear,
("'Twas poverty that drove me here")
But we were rich in hacin' health,
Itself a very mine o' wealth;
An' something o' as great a worth
As ane can ever hae on earth,
A heart that thro' misfortunes a'
Aye manfully o'ercomes them a';
An independent mind is what
"Maks man the man for a' that."
It's likely ye ne'er got my letter,
Gif this be sae I'm still your debtor,
Or that your answer has miscarried,
Or in the mighty ocean buried
Wi' "Brother Jonathan" that gaed doon
Sometime last year near Crescent toon.
But as we canna help what's gane,
I'll try gif I can tax my brain
To gie ye a' I ken that's new
In this the land o' Cariboo.

But first o' a' anent mysel
A word or twa I'm gaun to tell;
Ye nae doobt think my pouch is lined
Wi' gowden dust in Geordies coined,
That I'm as rich as any Jew
That swindles aff auld claes for new;
Noo, just that ye may ken my story,
I'll set my doin's a before ye.

In '63 I left my hame,
In that same year I bought a claim
Frae Cameron Jock o' Canada—
As smart a lad 's ye ever saw,
Wha's greatest fant was nane uncommon,
A gae strong likin' for a woman;
An ill loon wi' some men was Johnny,
Because he had sae muckle money!
But I hae travelled near and far
And aften hae I met with waur;
The claim he sell't me was nae bad,
An' ere three months I siller had.
Gin next year's spring I tried my luck
At prospeckin', but I got stuck,
An' Red Gulch eased me o' my cash
(I wish I hadna been so rash!)
Weel, I began the warld again,
An' warked for months wi' might an' main,
An' when 'twas drawin' towards the fa'
I wasna that ill aff ava,
The "Cameron" was my auld stay bye,
To feed my pouch when pumped dry.
In '65 I gaed to seek
My fortune upon Lightning Creek;
I fell in love—noo dinna start,
Dear Sawney, I ne'er lost my heart
But ance—"the theft I've lang forgive,
Forget the thief—ne'er while I live."
But to my tale: I fell in love,
O'er head and lugs and hand and glove,
An' thocht that nane could e'er surpass
The tocher o' the "Ayrshire Lass;"
I tried my best to catch her tin,
But ah, the jad, she took me in;
For four lang months I ran her drift,
Then wearied oot ga'er in a gift!
Syne back to Williams I did ca'
As puir a chiel 's ye ever saw;
A' summer than I stayed at hame
An' warked awa at my auld claim,
O' luck I had a real guid streak,
While's makin' thirty pounds a week;
And yet I wasna half content.
On prospeckin' I still was bent;
Had shares o'er a' the kintra side,
In shafts gaun doon thro' slum and slide;
Thocht ilka day I'd strike it big,
Sae didna mind the costs a fig.
O! had I kent what I ken noo
I'd sent my siller hame to you,
For long afore the winter's snaw
My cash took wings and flew awa',
And left me e'en withoot a groat,
But still an independent Scot.
A sae I maun begin anew
To fecht the ills o' Cariboo,
"But freedom's battle once begun
Tho' baffled oft is ever won."

Such, Sawney, is a mining life,
Cases like mine are unco rife,
In fac' there's dozens livin' here
Hae seen hard times for mony a year,
Yet still they wrestle on thro' a,
Tho' sometimes they do rin awa',
But whan a man can do nae better
He has to leave the creek a debtor,
Altho' I think it is a flicht
That's no just a'thegither richt;
HOOE'ER SAE PUIR A MAN MAY BE
HIS MOTTO SHOULD BE HONESTY;
Still here the miner on the whole
Is a straight gaun honest soul,
Wha pays his debts baith fair and free
Gif he's the cash to pay it wi'!

O' mining news I am but scant.
There's naething on the creek but want;
In this cauld season o' the year
There's little ane can do up here,
An' wark is at sae low a figure
As ane wad hardly pay a nigger!

There's nought but care on ilka han',
On every hour that passes, O!
An' Sawney, man, we hae nae chance
To spark amang the lassies, O!

A warldly race that riches chase,
Yet a gangs tapselteerie, O!
An' every hour we spend at e'en
Is spent without a dearie, O!

Last simmer we had lassies here
Frae Germany—the hurdies, O!
And troth I wot, as I'm a Scot,
They were the bonnie hurdies, O!

There was Kate and Mary, blithe and airy,
And dumpy little Lizzy, O!
An' ane they ca'd the kangaroo,
A strappin', rattlin hizzy, O!

They danced at nicht in dresses light,
Frae late until the early, O!
But oh! their hearts were hard as flint,
Which vexed the laddies sairly, O!

The Dollar was their only love,
And that they lo'ed fa' dearly, O!
They didna care a flea for men,
Let them coort hooe'er sincerely, O!

They left the creek wi' lots o' gold,
Danced frae oor lads sae clever, O!
My blessin's on their 'sour krout' heads
Gif they stay awa for ever, O!

CHORUS—Bonnie are the hurdies, O!
The German hurdy-gurdies, O!
The daftest hour that e'er I spent
Was dancin' wi' the hurdies, O!

W'at think ye, Sawney, o' my sang?
An good thing, it's no very lang;
The name I've gied 's 'The German Lasses,'
The air's the same's 'Green grows the Rashes.'
Maun, Sawney, ye wad like to see
The way they dance in this kintre,
They lift the lassies aff their feet
In sic a way that's no discreet,
Then a' at ance they'll let them drap;
Syne ilka lad begins to clap,
An' thro' the din an' fun an' stoure
Ye'll hear a voice say 'sock it to her!'
They whirl them round in waltz and galop
Wi' a real Glengary walop;
They strike their hands and beat their feet,
Then turn about and syne they'll meet;
An' after every dance, just think,
They walk up to the bar and drink!
They'll jingle glasses left an' right,
Their Dollar's gane—then 'Gesund act,'
Gif I get hame I'll put Meg thro'
The way they do in Cariboo!

There's no amusement here oure rife
('Twad be an unco sin in Fife),
Here some ne'er fash their heads ava
'Boot the commands or moral law.
Gif gamblin' be a devil's snare
There's scores around who dinna care,
An' gif their caught into the trap
They'll hardly fear the deil a snap.
Last night as I was lyin' asleep
I had a dream o' thae black sheep;
I saw kent faces doon below
A' glourin' thro' the flamin' glow.
An' fiendishly were playin' 'poker'
Wi' auld cloutie an' his stoker:
Then 'freeze-out' some did wish to play,
The deil consentin,' all obey;
An' for the whiskey they that nicht
Sat doon to play wi' a' their micht;
But ah, said cloutie, I've nae water,
Nor whiskey, tho' there's mony a malster;
There's in my larder some mince pies!
'Bully!' an honest miner cries,
An' a' the rest were unco glad
(And auld nick's bairns are richly fed).
They played for mony an hour that nicht,
And mony a pie was lost to sight.
Noo just as I got thro' my dream
A face I saw I winna name—
'Twas he who paid for a' the pies—
An' up his throat came deep drawn sighs.
Noo, Sawney, this I'm faith to tell,
He was a countryman o' mysel;
When some folk get awa frae hame
They loose a' sense o' sin an' shame,
An' sae they care nae hoo they're livin',
Believin' neither hell nor heaven!
SMA' SINS TO MUCKLE EVILS RISE,
THERE'S DANGER IN AULD CLOOTIE'S PIES.

We've three toon kirks upon the creek,
Oor ministers are a' sae meek
They canna live a year up here,
But gang below for warmer cheer;
But maybe this is just as weel,
When they're awa so is the deil,
He'll think he has us a' his ain,
And for that reason let's alane
An honest man—he's no to blame
Gif he even thinks the same,
For life is such in Cariboo
That ane might weel believe it true!
But still we'll try, as 'Rabie' writ,
'To turn the corner on him yet.'

Weel, Sawney, lad, I've said enoo
Aboot mysel an' Cariboo;
Mair reading micht but gie ye trouble
(An' hech! the postage wad be double),
But yet I maun a word or twa
Anent the folks sae far awa';

Ah! Sawney, man, I lang to see
The friends at hame sae dear to me:
My guid auld mither, honest soul,
Hoo muckle she has had to thole,
Frae her wild laddies, thoughtless chiels
(An' some folks ca'd us ne'er-do-weels!)
Hoo aften has she ta'en our pairt
When faither wad his micht assert,
An' aff the head or aff the back
Wad screen us frae an unco whack.
Oor faither ruled us wi' a whap,
But she wi' love—a surer grup;
Whan duty made her thresh us sair
She d aye begin wi' a bit prayer,
An' syne she'd tell us that sic evil
Wad mak us bairnies o' the devil;
She'd speak o't till her een were weet,
An' then, dear Sawney, we wad greet;
Jist ane sic threshin' frae our mither
Wad mak us guid for weeks thegither,
And mony, mony a time since than
Has keeplt us frae doin' wrang.
(THE THREAT'NIN'S O' THE MORAL LAW
WILL SCARCE MAK ONY GOOD AVA,
BUT WHAN LOVE SPEAKS WHA CAN WITHSTAND
THE CHASTENIN'S O' SAE KIND A HAND).
Hoo tenderly frae week to week
She nursed us baith when we were seeck!
Put a' oor dearest friends thegither,
An', Sawney, wha is like a mither?

Gie my regards to a' at hame,
An' tell dear Meg that I'm the same
As whan I left the auld kintra
To mak my fortune o'er the sea;
And tho' I'm sair forefoughten, still
I'll feeht my way wi' richt guid will,
Until auld Scotland sees me back
Wi' siller, or without a plack.
God bless ye, Sawney, a' ye'r life,
Happy at hame wi' bairns and wife;
At e'enin's whan the fireside gleams
Whiles spare a thocht for your friend

JEAMES.

LETTER NO. III.

DEAR SAWNEY.—Little did I think
That Eighteen Sixty-seven
Wad see me still in Cariboo
A howkin for a livin'.
The first twa years I spent oot here
Were nae sae ill ava,
But hoo I've lived since syne, my freen'
There's little need to blaw!
Like foot-ba' knockit back an' fere
That's lang in reaching goal,
Or feather blawn by ilka wind
That whistles 'tween each Pole,
E'en sae my mining life has been
Foo mony a weary day
(Will that sun never rise for me
That shines for makin' hay?)
'Tis weel for us we dinna ken
The future as the past.
Oor troubles wad be doubled then
By being sae fore-cast,
Unless to us was gi'en the power,
Like shelt'r'in frae a shower,
To scoug beneath some freendly bield
Till ilka blast was oure.
Yet man, sae thochtless an' sae rash,
Nae doubt wad aften sleep,
An' like the foolish virgins five
Wad cilless cruises keep,
Till wauken'd by the storms o' life
Oure late to rin awa,
He'd wish the future had been blank
To him, as 'tis to a'.

Weel, here at last I'm workin' oot
A lab'rer by the day,
Mang face-boards, water, slum an' mud,
To keep the wolf away!
Adversity's a sair sair school,
An' ane that few can prize,
Althe its hardships aften are
But "blessin's in disguise."
My sympathies gang wi' the man
Wha labors for anither,
That never kent what 'twas to toil
For ten lang hours thegither.
Some masters look on workin' men
As packers see their trains,
But beasts o' burden, nathing mair,
For adding to their gains;
But ilka doggie has his day,
Baith thorough-bred an' cross:
Sae very aft ain sees oot here
The mule become the boss!
There's mony a wholesome lesson taught
To ane by being "broke,"
But aye oure readily forgot
At the first lucky stroke:
Some men weel aff in warldly means
Are friendship's very sel'
As lang as ye are kent to be
What folks ca' "doin' well!"
But should ye ever stoop to ask
Frae ain the sma'est help,
It acts upon them like a stane
Thrown at a nameless whelp!
Hoo many freends the wealthy have,
Freends o' the sunny hour!
(I've felt this, Sawney, since I stood
Bare-headed in the shower).
But still I fand a faithfu' few
Around me in my need,
Not rich—but warm an' kindly hearts
That's weel ca'd "freends in deed."
Sometimes I've thocht on lookin' roond
That rogues an' fools thrive maist,
While steady, honest, ploddin' men
O' fortune hae the least,
Tho' 'twad be wrang sae to conclude,
Life's no made o' a day,
But tak the three-score years an' ten
An' syne the balance weigh,
"Appearances do aft deceive."
But here my mind's at rest,
That baith o' this warld an' the next
The upright man has best.

Strange what a change a little gold
Maks on a little head,
That never kent much mair than hoo
To chaw its daily bread!
I've seen some chields weel liked by a'
When workin for a livin'
Assume mair airs than ony daw
That ere caw'd under heaven—
When ance they had a slice o' luck
(An' some were rais'd on parritch),
Believe themsels e'en gentlemen!
An' walk'd wi' men o' carritch—
But minin's like the country here,
Has mony an' up an' doon;
Ae day ye're stannin' on your feet,
The next day on your croon!
Sae thae vain laddies gat a coup
But fell upon their feet!
Their pray'r should be, "O keep us poor,
Or wealth an' wisdom wi't!"
I kent a body mak a strike—
He look'd a little lord!
An' had a clan o' followers
Amang a needy horde.
Whane'er he'd enter a saloon
You'd see the barkeep smile—
His lordship's humble servant he,
Without a thocht o' guile!
A twal' months past an' a' is gane,
Baith freends an' brandy bottle,
An noo the puir soul's left alane,
Wi' nocht to weet his throttle!

An' since I've seen the Barkeeper,
Wha seem'd sae sweet before,
Wi' some persuasion show this chield
The ootside o' the door!
Ah! gold, gold, gold! we worship gold—
What signifies the man?
Hae ye but siller ye're a God,
Your character wha'd scan!
But be ye poor, than a' maun see
Whate'er ye are aboot,
If there's a 'hole in a' your coat'
Their sure to find it oot.
Yet tak the bawbees frae the ain
An' gie them to the ither,
This man will get the warld's hand,
And that man it's cauld shoulther!

There's naething like a minin' life
In ony trade or art
That brings to licht sae forcibly
Each feelin' of the heart;
The mean, the selfish and the proud,
Conceited and the vain,
Are known by ilka turn they mak
In this pursuit o' gain,
While open-hearted, manly souls
Made o' a finer clay,
Tho' strivin' hard for wealth themsels
Help ithers on their way.

'Tis strange yet true as soon's a man
Has guid luck and weel fares,
His freends begin to think him prood
An' gi'en himsel airs;
Sincerity whiles maks me feel
we "saddle the wrang horse."
'Tis we wha being poor are proud,
But he maun get the curse!
Nae doubt there are some men around
Wi self-conceit confined,
A consequential body theirs
To hide a vacant mind.
Puir silly creatures, harmless chields,
O' glory tak your fill!
Think highly o' yoursels, my freends,
Nae ither body will!

But, Sawney, I could name some men
As open as the day;
What matter whether rich or poor
Aye gentlemen are they..
What matter tho' the claes be fine,
Or a' their duds threadbare?
'Tis no the coat that reads the man,
The heart's the dial there;
But somehoo, Sawney, as a class
Their "backs are at the wa'."
'Tis may be, as a miner said,
"Because their brains are sma':"
Owre sma' to steal, owre sma' to cheat,
To gain wealth by a lee.
If this be what the wise man meant
May aye their brains be wee!

Amang the hunders livin' here
There's barely ten per cent
That s. in the vice o' cards an' dice,
Such is the natural bent.
I ken some men, aye an' respeck,
Are Gamblin's abject slaves,
(O would they only pause an' think,
Life ends not in their graves.)
There's mony a debt maun gang unpaid,
An' mony a promise broken,
To gratify an appetite
For ever, ever croakin;
The law can never mak a saunt,
Hoo'eer severe it be—
But Gamblin' as a vice affects
A whole communi y.
We want an Alderman like 'Cute,'
To 'Put this nu'sance down,'
Or a Grand Jury wi' a will
To drive it to the groun:
Yet Gamblers indirectly help
To furnish the Exchequer,
They're prized by mony a whisky shop
As cargoes to a wrecker:
Sae men in pow'r maun shut their een,
In fact they dinna care
As lang 's the Revenue is rais'd
Whether foul the means or fair.
Puir honour to be ruled by some
Aristocratic swells,
Wha guide the reins o' Gover'ment
Just as it suits themsels!
Besides, it ceases to be sae
Whan'eer it costs owre dear.
(But 'shadows o' a great Event
Foreshadow changes hear!)
A star has risen i' the East,
An' on its disc 'salvation!'
Its ring around wi' letters bound
Shines oot 'Confederation!'
The 'brightest gem in Britain's Crown'
Is Canada's Domain,
And whan 'tis anchored in the seas
'Twill strength as lustre gain.

There's neither kirk nor Sunday here,
Altho' there's mony a' sinner,
An' if we're steep'd in a' that's bad,
Think ye there's muckle winner?
There is a little meetin' house
That's ca'd the Cambrian Ha,'
Its members few—but these I view
As saut preservin' a'—
But if we hinna got a kirk
We hae anither biggin
(Altho' it may na point sae clear
The way abune the riggin)
That gies amusement to the boys
An' brings them a' thegither
Ae nicht a week for twa short hours
To laugh wi' ane anither.
I dinna ken what name to gi'ed,
A 'Play-house' ye despise,
Would 'Amateur Dramatic Club'
Look better in your eyes?
You Sawneys are a moral folk,
Altho' ye will get fou!
'Twad do ye a' a sight o' guid
Twa years in Cariboo!

'Twas my intent to show you a'
The hardships o' this life,
But second thochts hae chang'd my mind,
For ye wad tell yere wife!
An' weel ye ken that women's tongues
Are common to ilk ither,
An' ere a week or sae was owre
She'd claik it to my mither,
Puir body, wha wad grieve her heart
By adding to her care—
He's but a coward at the best
Wha troubles canna bear.

Your letters, Sawney, are a boon,
An' postage now is less,
An' Barnard's Cariboo 'Delay'
Can fairly claim 'Express.'
Be sure an' write me ev'ry month,
If naething but 'cauld kale.'*
To see hoo much hame news is prized,
Read

* Anything repeated.

WAITING FOR THE MAIL.

Man's life is like a medley,
Composed of many airs,
Which make us glad or make us sad
And oft our laughter dares:
E'en so, our hearts have many chords
And strains of light and strong,
Which make us glad or make us sad,
Like changes in the song:
Our smiles and tears, our hopes and fears,
Our sorrows never fail,
But ev'ry heart knows not the smart
Of waiting for the mail.

A teamster from the Beaver Pass—
"What news of the Express?"
"'Twas there last night, if I heard right;
'Twill be to-day, 'I guess.'"
A miner next on William Creek,
Arrived from wint'ring south,
"He heard some say 'twould be to-day
Expected at the Mouth."
But here comes Pool, in haste, his rule—
"Hallo! what of the mail?"
From him we learn, with some concern,
"Just two days out from Yale!"

Ah! waiting is a weariness,
"The Express is at Van Winkle!"
This makes the face deny the case,
And quite removes the wrinkle.
A few hours more—a great uproar—
The Express is come at last!
An Eastern mail, see by the bale,
As "Sullivan" goes past;
And now an eager anxious crowd
Await the "lettor sale."
Postmaster curst—their wrath was nurs'd
By waiting for the mail.

"Hurrah!" at length the window's up—
"There's nothing, 'John,' for me?"
John knows the face—the letter place—
"Two bits on that," says he.
And many come and many go
In sorrow or delight,
While some will say "their's met delay."
Whose friends forgot to write;
An anxious heart, who stands apart,
Expectant of a letter,
With hopeful mind, but fears to find
Some loved one still his debtor.

The day is pass'd, the office closed,
The letters are deliver'd,
And some have joy without alloy
While some fond hopes are shiver'd:
A sweetheart wed—a dear friend dead,
Or closer tie is broken;
Ah! many an ache the heart may take
By words tho' never spoken.
But whether good or bad the news
This happens without fail,
Your letter read—the fire is fed
For waiting on the Mail.

An' noo, dear Sawney, 'Fare the weel!'
Tho' we can never meet,
Ye'll hae a big share o' my heart
As ye hae o' this sheet.
My fondest hope is but to find
Some hearts as 'leal an' true
'Mang Scotland's hills an' Scotland's dales'
As freends in Cariboo.

JAS. ANDERSON.

WILLIAM CREEK,
22d June, 1868